

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 4 as follows:

SOCS proteins contain a central SH2 domain and a C-terminal homology domain we have termed the SOCS box (1). The first member of this family was called CIS (cytokine-inducible SH2-containing protein) (2) and was shown to inhibit erythropoietin and interleukin-3 receptor signalling. The inventors cloned SOCS-1 from a retroviral expression library as a cDNA whose constitutive expression inhibited interleukin-6-induced differentiation of MI cells and it was simultaneously cloned as a protein that interacted with activated JAK kinases (JAK-binding protein, JAB) (3) and as a protein with antigenic similarity to STATs (STAT-inducible STAT inhibitor, SSI) (4). The sequence similarity of SOCS-1 and CIS led to the identification of six additional members of this family (SOCS-2-7) each with an SH2 domain and a C-terminal SOCS box (1,5,6). An additional twelve proteins have been described that contain a C-terminal SOCS box but instead of an SH2 domain they contain different protein-protein interaction domains including WD40, ankyrin repeats, SPRY (SEQ ID NO: 6) or small GTPase domains (1).